**Evidence Types**

There are many different types of evidence you might consult to answer a research question: background information (e.g., **textbooks**), expert opinion, **case reports** and studies, cohort studies, non-randomized and randomized **controlled trials**, critically appraised literature and evidence-based guidelines, and **systematic reviews** & meta-analyses.

**The Evidence Pyramid3**

These can be organized into a hierarchy of general reliability3:



**Fig 1.** This image was produced by Bradley A. Long and Audrey Rock, Central Michigan University Libraries (©2016).  The image is based on the EBM Page Generator from Dartmouth College and Yale University (©2006) and the Coursera MOOC  “Understanding Clinical Research: Behind the Statistics” (©2016).

**The Evidence Pyramid3**

The pyramid from critically appraised literature up is considered **filtered** information because someone has already assessed the quality of studies. The rest of the pyramid is considered **unfiltered** information and you will need to critically appraise the quality of articles before relying on them for information.

Systematic reviews and meta-analyses (top of the pyramid) are considered the **gold standard** of evidence as they collect, summarize, and analyze all other empirical evidence about a topic.

**Study Design & Study Topic4**

You should also consider what type of evidence is best-suited to answer your question:





References

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